PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

<u>**FY 2016 Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program:**
Placement Components</u>

<u>**Funding Opportunity Number: (ECA-ECAPEC-16-024)**</u>

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)
Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division

These POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Youth Programs Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) for the 2017-2018 Academic Year. Organizations applying for this award are hereinafter referred to as Placement Organizations (POs). Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program-specific guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Overview:
The YES program provides scholarships for approximately 900 high school students (ages 15-18.5 at the start of the program) from countries with significant Muslim populations to spend an academic year or a semester in the United States during the approximate period of August 2017 until June 2018. Malaysian students, who will arrive in January 2018, are the only group that participates for a single semester. For budgetary purposes, the applicant may expect that one in every 15-20 students will be a semester student. To date, over 9,500 students have participated in the YES program. The program is vital to enhancing relations between the United States and countries with significant Muslim populations and furthers the Department of State's goals of promoting mutual understanding and respect and engaging youth populations. Students live with volunteer host families, attend high school, participate in activities to learn about American society and values, acquire leadership skills, and help educate Americans about their countries and cultures.

This solicitation and the activities to which it refers apply only to YES program students who may be recruited from among the following countries: Albania, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Egypt, Gaza, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel (Arab Communities), Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Suriname, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, West Bank, and Yemen. Information about the YES Program can be found at:
http://www.exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/kennedy-lugar-youth-exchange-study-yes

<u>Note</u>: The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposed project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the program's needs and availability of funds. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust and/or add additional countries and/or regions should conditions change in a partner country and/or if other countries and/or regions are identified as viable alternatives and/or Department priorities.

YES Program Participants: YES participants are 15-18.5 years old at the start of their program. They travel to the United States on J-1 visas, issued by the U.S. Department of State. Applicants must demonstrate knowledge of and adhere to all requirements and regulations of the J-1 Secondary School Student visa program. Under the terms of their visas, they must return to their home countries following the conclusion of their exchange program in the United States. Placement Components award recipients are expected to assist the State Department in enforcing this regulation.

The Department of State seeks to include students of diverse national and ethnic backgrounds and students with disabilities. Participants are selected for the program on the basis of academic merit and personal character. Applicants undergo a series of exams and are interviewed in person for evaluation of their ability to adjust to new cultures and their English language proficiency. Although most applicants have good academic preparation and English comprehension, speaking, and writing skills, a small number of program participants will need English language tutoring or other academic tutoring after arriving in their host communities. Organizations are encouraged to propose resources that could meet this need. Finalists also undergo rigorous medical screening.

Distribution of Students: Your proposal must include a plan to place and monitor a minimum of 30 students, although recipients are encouraged to place more than 30 students; there is no maximum number. An applicant may propose a sub-recipient(s) organizations to share in placing students. In this case, the applicant must place at least 30 students, and sub-recipients have no minimum number. FY 2016 Placement Components award recipients will accept and place students assigned by the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient. Your organization's students may come from any of the countries listed earlier or others as determined by ECA. Approval of final allocations to all or POs will be made by ECA.

The following YES program components are described for your information as you conceptualize and develop your proposal and should not be reflected in your budget.

Overseas Components: YES program overseas operations are conducted under a separate award called the YES Overseas Components. The Overseas Components award recipient is responsible for recruitment and selection of students; organization and distribution of student assignments and application packets to POs, preparation of cross-cultural materials; pre-departure orientation and arrival orientations; international travel scheduling and arrangements from home to host community and return; facilitation of ongoing communication between the participants' natural parents and the POs, as needed regarding student progress and well-being; maintenance of a student database; and ongoing follow-up with alumni after their return home.

Many key activities of the PO will be conducted in direct coordination with the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient. It is imperative for the success of the YES program that your organization work efficiently and openly with the Department of State and the Overseas Components award recipient for the duration of the award. The Overseas Components award recipient is responsible for the coordination of many overarching activities involved in the YES program implementation. Each PO is provided with an *Operational Guidelines* manual developed by ECA and the Overseas Components recipient that gives instructions to POs to ensure the smooth coordination of tasks.

Disability Component: Students with disabilities are recruited by the Overseas Components award recipient along with all other students. Students with disabilities must meet the same eligibility standards as all other applicants, but may receive reasonable accommodations for testing and program participation. Your organization may be asked to place, monitor, and support students with disabilities. The Overseas Component award recipient will conduct a post-arrival orientation, provide funding for reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, and offer support to the students and their POs. Additional information is provided in Section II. 6. Student with Disabilities.

Civic Education Workshop: All YES students will have the opportunity to apply to attend a one-week Civic Education Workshop, coordinated and funded through the FY 2016 Overseas Components award) and generally held in early spring in Washington, D.C. for approximately 100 participants. Your proposal should not contain information about the workshop but should include confirmation that you will notify your students of the opportunity to apply. FY 2016 Placement Component award recipients will receive additional information from the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient about application procedures.

English Teaching Workshop: Under a separate award from ECA, students participating in ECA-sponsored academic year programs, including YES, will be eligible to apply to attend a workshop focused on teaching English as a foreign language. The workshop may include 10-15 YES students. Dates, requirements, and other details will be provided during the program. POs are asked to notify their students of the opportunity to apply.

YES Inbound Program Goals:
The overall goals of the YES program are to:
1. Promote better understanding by youth from the United States and selected countries about host society, people, institutions, values, and culture;
2. Foster lasting personal and professional ties;
3. Advance mutual understanding, respect for diversity, leadership skills, and understanding of civil society during the exchange experience and beyond; and,
4. Enhance understanding of other countries and cultures and increase accurate understanding of American values in communities abroad.

Program Timetable:
- August 1, 2016: Cooperative Agreements awarded

- Fall 2016: Program marketing begins
- February 2017: Student application distribution
- Spring 2017: Recruitment of host schools and families
- Early to Mid-August: Early arrival of students with disabilities
- August 2017: Remaining students begin to arrive in groups
- Late August 2017: All final placement information (host family names and addresses, confirmed school enrollments) must be submitted to Department of State
- August-September 2017: Student Post-arrival orientations
- September 2017: First Non-Competitive Continuation (NCC) exercised for the 2018-19 academic year program, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.
- January-February 2018: Student Mid-Year orientations
- February-March 2018: Annual Meeting for POs in Washington DC
- Spring 2018: Civic Education Workshop in Washington DC for 100 selected YES students; English Teaching Workshop for approximately 30 ECA-sponsored students (**For your information only. Do <u>not</u> offer a plan or budget in your proposal for these events.**)
- May-June 2018: Student Re-Entry orientations and departure
- September 2018: Second NCC exercised for the 2019-20 academic year program, pending successful performance and the availability of funds
- September 30, 2020: Cooperative Agreement end date

B. Department of State and Award Recipient Responsibilities

Organization Responsibilities and Oversight
The Office of Citizen Exchanges in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State is the designated Exchange Visitor Program (J-1 Visa) sponsor, with ultimate responsibility for the YES Program. All POs – including their employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of YES – receiving cooperative agreements to administer the Placement Component will be considered under the terms of such grants to be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor [i.e., The Office of Citizen Exchanges] in the conduct of the sponsor's program" (22 CFR Section 62.2).

POs are not required to be designated as J-1 Visa sponsors under this award. However, as third parties, all POs are required to follow J-1 Visa regulations.

Because the actions of such third parties are imputed to the designated sponsor, the Bureau expects that all POs – including their employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of YES – will both comply with the regulations and requirements of the J-1 Visa program and render all necessary assistance to enable the Office of Citizen Exchanges to be in full compliance with the same. Accordingly, POs must ensure their "employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of [YES grants and cooperative agreements] are adequately qualified, appropriately trained, and comply with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations" (22 CFR 62.9(f) (2)).

Relevant portions of the regulations governing the administration of an exchange visitor program are set forth in 22 CFR 62.25(d)(15), Program administration: "Sponsors must ensure that all

officers, employees, representatives, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf … adhere to all regulatory provisions set forth in this Part and all additional terms and conditions governing program administration that the Department may impose."

Responsibilities of the Department of State:
In a cooperative agreement, ECA is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA's activities and responsibilities for the YES program include:
- Providing advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- Serving as liaison between the award recipients and personnel within the Department of State, including ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- Monitoring and evaluating the program and its participants through email and phone communication, and site visits.
- Hosting an annual meeting for all award recipients to provide program guidance and gather feedback.
- Approving program materials and website information.
- Representing the U.S. government as the program sponsor at exchange events, program events, and orientations, as appropriate.
- Publicizing program highlights and responding to Congressional and Department requests for information.
- Performing an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance, the availability of funding, and the submission of quarterly reports are a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of NCCs.

Responsibilities of the PO:
The FY 2016 YES program Placement Components award recipients will be responsible for the following general activities. **Further guidelines and explanations of YES program requirements are found in Section II, "Program Specific Guidelines."**

1. *Materials:* Prepare and disseminate YES Programs materials. Provide information about your organization and its policies and procedures to the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient to assist in the production of YES websites, program materials, handbooks, and other YES materials to be developed under that award.

2. *Marketing:* Develop organization-specific promotional and marketing materials that identify the YES program as a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program. Additional marketing materials can be obtained from the Overseas Components recipient.

3. *Host Families:* Screen, select, and secure host families prior to the students' departures from their home countries.

4. *Host Schools:* Identify accredited secondary schools and secure enrollment for the students prior to their departures from their home countries.

5. *Student Insurance:* Provide medical insurance for the students. See 8. Student Insurance under II. Program Specific Guidelines for additional information.

6. *Local Coordinators and Host Family Training:* Provide YES program-specific training and orientation to staff, local coordinators, volunteers, and host families. Training must also address J-1 visa regulations.

7. *ECA Academic Year Programs Annual Meeting:* Participate with approximately two representatives in the annual ECA academic year programs meeting, to be held for two days in Washington, D.C. (Spring 2018). It is recommended that one representative be from your organization's financial office.

8. *Orientations:* Conduct post-arrival, mid-program, and end-of-year orientations for students.

9. *Students with Disabilities*: Provide support for students with disabilities. See 6. Students with Disabilities under II. Program Specific Guidelines for more information.

10. *English and Academic Tutoring:* Project and budget for the potential needs of English language and/or other academic tutoring. (See allowable costs under Section III.3.)

11. *Enhancement Programs:* Conduct cultural enhancement programs throughout the exchange. (See allowable costs under Section III.3.)

12. *Leadership Development:* Facilitate skills and leadership development programs within allowable costs for enhancement activities. (See allowable costs under Section III.3)

13. *Community Service Activities:* Establish guidelines for community service requirements and assist students in identifying opportunities for community service and involvement.

14. *Program Impact Highlights:* Regularly provide timely reports of students' significant accomplishments and host community impact throughout the exchange.

15. *Student Likeness (Photos and Video) Usage:* Confirm with the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient that a waiver, signed by the student and the student's natural family to have photographic or video images of the student taken, reproduced and published, is on record before allowing such activity.

16. *Participant Monitoring:* Monitor students, local coordinators, and host families to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the students as well as academic and social adjustment success. As problems of any nature arise, including concerns related to adjustment, behavior, academics, health and safety, etc., provide timely management of the situation and support to the student, communicating such concerns to the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient and to ECA as directed.

17. *Staff Training and Monitoring:* Train and monitor PO employees and volunteers, including local coordinators and third parties acting on their behalf to support students.

18. *Financial Management:* Manage fiscal data and accounting for award funding, as required by federal law, including cost-sharing and any funds provided to approved subaward recipients, if applicable.

19. *SubAward Recipient Management:* If applicable, ensure that subaward recipients have received a copy of the NOFO and POGI and are versed in all requirements, including OMB Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, your organization's expectations, and J-1 visa regulations. Provide oversight to subaward recipients that ensures the quality of their performance of YES program duties under your organization's award.

20. *Evaluation:* Conduct quarterly evaluations of your organization's success in achieving the YES program outcomes and report such results on a quarterly basis.

21. *Performance and Financial Reporting:* Prepare and submit quarterly and final program performance and financial reports.

II. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Detailed Guidance Related to Responsibilities Listed Above

1. Materials
Pre-Departure Orientation Materials:
POs must prepare materials specific to their organization for students that will be distributed by the Overseas Components recipient during the Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO). Materials must be received by the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient by May 1, 2017 for distribution at PDO. All materials must identify students as YES students and must include information on the U.S. Department of State as the program sponsor.

Promotional Materials:
All official documents and materials developed for promotional purposes must acknowledge the U.S. Department of State's role as program sponsor. Where appropriate, documents will include the American flag and the State Department seal. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and may distribute materials related to this program. Please reference D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients in the NOFO for more information.
http://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/communications_guidance_for_eca_recipient_organizations.pdf

2. Host Families
POs' practices and procedures for recruiting, screening, and selecting host families and placing YES participants with host families must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category (22 CFR 62.25).

Proposals that demonstrate compliance with these regulations and detail your organization's oversight over local coordinators will be deemed more competitive under the Participant Monitoring Review Criterion. Please contact the YES Program Office if you have any questions regarding how the regulations apply to YES participants.

3. Host Schools

POs' practices and procedures for placing YES participants in accredited public or private secondary educational institutions must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category (22 CFR 62.25).

Due to unique sensitivities, POs must obtain ECA concurrence before placing students in religious, private, and non-traditional public schools. For schools with a religious affiliation, student and natural parent approval is also required. Home schooling is not an option.

4. Clustering

ECA encourages placements in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in a wide range of rural, urban, and suburban settings. POs that choose to cluster all or most of their students will be deemed more competitive. A cluster is defined as a minimum of three ECA-funded scholarship students who live within reasonable proximity and can be brought together for activities that address common ECA-funded program themes (e.g., orientations and program enhancement activities). ECA-funded scholarship students are identified as those participating in YES, as well as the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX), and the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) programs.

Applicants are expected to cluster a minimum of 60% of their placements. Multiple local coordinators may work together to form a cluster. Applicants must describe how local staff and volunteers will provide non-clustered exchange students the benefits of orientations and enhancement activities.

5. English and Academic Tutoring

You should anticipate that a small percentage of students may require English or other academic tutoring to support them in their educational requirements. You are not expected to organize a formal training program. However, you should offer cost-effective plans for how you would address this need and budget for it. Your proposal should describe your strengths in placing and supporting students with these individualized needs.

6. Students with Disabilities:

The YES program provides special assistance to approximately 10-20 students with disabilities each year. Your proposal must include a plan for placing, monitoring, and supporting students with disabilities. Separate funding is provided through the FY 2016 YES Organizational Components to help support students with disabilities and their POs. You will coordinate necessary reasonable accommodation expenses with the FY 2016 Organizational Components award recipient as needed and as required by law. It is anticipated that each PO will be assigned at least one student with disabilities.

For your information, the responsibilities of the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient include:

- Contacting disability organizations for hosting outreach.

- Conducting a 3-to-4 day Preparatory Workshop for students immediately upon their arrival to educate students on the laws and resources available for people with disabilities in the United States. The FY 2016 Organizational Components award recipient will be responsible for travel to and from the workshop.

- Thoroughly assessing each student's condition and specific needs during the Preparatory Workshop and providing an assessment report to the appropriate PO.

- Providing POs with support and resources throughout the year.

- Providing funding for reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

7. Trainings/Orientations
Proposals should include sample outlines with relevant topics to be covered in all trainings and orientations.

YES-specific Staff/Volunteer Training and Orientation: POs are responsible for conducting YES-specific training for all their employees, including all local coordinators, volunteers, and third parties acting on their behalf who are involved in the FY 2016 Placement Component awards. This training should be designed to provide the methods and tools necessary for monitoring and counseling YES students, their host families, and school personnel with sensitivity to cross-cultural issues unique to this exchange population. The training must ensure understanding of the goals, expectations, and requirements of the YES Program as explained in this POGI, as well as all J-1 Visa requirements.

Host Family Orientation: Prior to the student's arrival, the PO must conduct an in-person YES-specific orientation for all screened and selected host families and provide them with the information and reference materials necessary to host and support a YES student. (Note: Previous interviews during the screening and selecting process do not constitute this YES -specific orientation.) The YES Program Office recommends that orientations for families hosting YES students not include other non-YES host families to ensure that adequate attention is given to YES program-related and cross-cultural issues.

Arrival Orientation for Participants: POs' practices and procedures for the YES student orientation must meet the general J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program regulations and the secondary school student category-specific orientation requirements. Orientations should take place within one month of the students' arrival, and they should address the PO's policies, procedures, and rules, as well as the PO's procedures for communicating with students and for monitoring and supporting their exchange with sensitivity to cultural issues unique to this exchange population. The orientations must ensure understanding of the goals, expectations, and requirements of the YES Program as explained in this POGI.

Mid-Year Orientation: POs must arrange a mid-year orientation to meet with all YES Program participants approximately halfway through their exchange programs, preferably in January. The

purpose of this meeting is to assess their progress in achieving Program and personal goals and to provide the necessary assistance to enable them to meet these goals.

Re-entry Training: POs are responsible for preparing students for bringing closure to their American exchange experiences as well as re-entry to their home countries. POs must ensure that students receive relevant information concerning YES Program alumni opportunities in their respective countries and discuss individual plans for possible alumni projects. Note: Alumni activities are coordinated in the students' countries through the FY 2016 Organizational Components.

8. Student Insurance:
The Bureau offers the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) plan for students participating in the program. Detailed information on ASPE can be found in 10 FAM 240: http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/88250.pdf. There is no cost to the PO if the PO opts to use the ASPE plan. POs wishing to use a different plan must demonstrate that such alternate plan provides comparable or more comprehensive coverage. <u>Coverage must begin when students depart their home countries and not conclude until they return home.</u> Please keep in mind that the students with disabilities who participate in the Disability Components Preparatory Workshop must be covered by the PO's health insurance policy while they are participating in the workshop. <u>If you choose not to use ASPE, your proposal must include a copy of your chosen insurance policy and must include the cost of the insurance in the budget. The insurance you propose to use must meet the requirements of 22 CFR 62.14.</u> **Students and natural families must be informed in writing of any limitations of coverage noted in the policies. Coverage must begin when students depart their home countries and not conclude until they return to their home countries.**

9. Participant Monitoring
POs' practices and procedures for monitoring YES participants must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category, i.e., 22 CFR 62.25.

Monitoring Guidance: The Office of Citizen Exchanges provides the following further guidance that POs must follow:
- Student Progress: Local coordinators will monitor students' progress in academics, social adjustment, and activities such as community service, exemplary achievements, and other program-related endeavors and track their progress in monthly contact reports.

- Reporting Systems: POs will use reporting systems to distribute and collect monthly updates, reports, and other communications that students will fill out and submit themselves. Your proposal should provide details on this system. Plans that describe ways to attain 100% student participation will be deemed more competitive under the "Participant Monitoring" review criterion. The purpose of these student monthly updates is to allow YES students to self-report issues and to allow the POs to track these issues effectively. POs must promptly notify ECA and the FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient about problems, inconsistencies, or concerns that are identified from these updates.

- Student Support: Local coordinators will identify when students may need additional support from their natural parents, peers, or other PO staff; arrange counseling for participants if needed; document the circumstances; and notify the PO who will, when necessary, notify the FY 2016 Organizational Components award recipient to gain natural parent perspective or concurrence. POs also will notify ECA when necessary.

- Early Returns: If a situation leads to an early return request, the PO should provide ECA with consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved students, host families, and natural families are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. POs will prepare a clear and concise On-Program Support (OPS) Report of the circumstances detailing communication between parties. The report will be shared with the FY 2016 Organizational Components award recipient and ECA. Only the Office of Citizen Exchanges can make the decision to terminate and repatriate a student; under no circumstances will POs, or anyone acting on their behalf, inform YES participants or imply to them that their programs will terminate or that they will be repatriated without specific direction from the Office of Citizen Exchanges.

Site visits:
- Full-time permanent employee(s) or an official designate of the PO's headquarters must conduct site visits to 20% of your YES students in their host communities. The purpose of these visits is to see the YES students in their host family/community environments. The visits should cover a combination of clustered and non-clustered students. These site visits should be conducted in close coordination with the Bureau to complement Program Office site visits and ensure maximum coverage.

- POs should submit site visit plans to ECA through the on-program support email address provided to award recipients. Site visit plans for October-December should be submitted by September 30, 2017. Site visit plans for January-June should be submitted by December 15, 2017.

Communication Guidance:
- POs, whether they are designated as sponsors by the Department of State or not, will report to the ECA YES Program Office any matters that are required to be reported by a sponsor pursuant to the above regulations. The Program Office, as the YES sponsor, will be responsible for reporting to the Office of Private Sector Exchange.

- POs must provide the Office of Citizen Exchanges with reports of all situations that affect the health, safety, or well-being of YES participants.

- POs are required to enter complete, accurate, and up-to-date placement information into the YES web-based database, including host family and Local Coordinator changes that may occur during the year, <u>within 48 hours of the time that the change took place.</u>

- In a timely fashion, POs must distribute to all YES students information that the Office of Citizen Exchanges provides regarding Department-initiated YES Program activities. Such activities include: International Education Week, Civic Education Workshop, Global Youth Service Day, and ad-hoc program-related activities that may arise during the year (e.g., online chats, meetings, briefings).

In a timely manner, POs must inform the Office of Citizen Exchanges of any publicity that highlights students or the YES Program in a positive light or otherwise strengthens outreach efforts, particularly those that involve government officials and the media. When the media interact with YES students, POs should identify the YES Program as a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program. Please reference D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients in the NOFO for more information.
http://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/communications_guidance_for_eca_recipient_organizations.pdf

10. Enhancements
Cultural Enhancement Activities:
POs are required to conduct cultural enhancement activities during the academic year to increase the participants' understanding of American culture, values, and history. These activities should expose students to key elements of American civil society and foster dialogue and enduring ties between the students and their host communities.

Examples of cultural enhancement activities include briefings on local or state government and the judicial system; programs on community issues and concerns (e.g., environmental protection, substance abuse prevention, HIV awareness) that expose participants to and increase their understanding of the diversity that exists in American society.

Funding for enhancement activities should be disbursed in small increments throughout the year to encourage a variety of activities. Enhancement funds may not be spent on large packaged sightseeing trips.

Leadership Development Programs:
POs should provide opportunities for the development of leadership skills such as public speaking, team-building, critical thinking, and goal-setting so that the students are prepared to apply these skills both while on program and once they return to their home countries. Proposed training should explore issues that foster civic responsibility, tolerance, public service, conflict-resolution, and management. POs are encouraged to allocate separately a portion of the enhancement activities fund mentioned above for specialized training and group activities in these areas and are encouraged to interact with established local youth-oriented groups and to use free or low-cost resources.

Community Service Requirements:
All YES students are required to participate in community service activities. POs are expected to provide participants and their host families with clear and precise guidelines that reflect the standards, requirements, and expectations, including but not limited to the following:
1. Minimum number of hours and type (e.g., volunteer work or other tasks) of required community service;
2. Method by which POs will monitor community service; and
3. Consequences of failing to meet this obligation.

11. *Student Financial and Gift Incentives:*
As recipients of a full scholarship with continuing support and opportunities for alumni, YES students accept considerable responsibilities in return. Participation in program activities,

including orientations, cluster meetings and events; community service; and presentations during International Educations Week are requirements. Therefore, POs should not request funds to give students monetary or other large material incentives to participate in program-related activities.

12. Performance Reports
The YES Program Office will supply quarterly report guidelines. POs must submit all quarterly performance reports in accordance with the instructions in the FY 2016 Placement Components NOFO no more than 30 days after the reporting period end dates. An SF-PPR "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all performance reports. Please also follow the instructions provided in the FY2016 Placement Components NOFO for the submission of the final performance report.

13. Evaluation
The Bureau expects POs to track host families and other key participants and to develop an evaluation plan to measure gains in mutual understanding and the exchange of information. Proposals must include a plan for evaluating program outputs and outcomes as defined by the applicant. ECA may request assistance in administering additional evaluation tools to participants that are separate from your organization's internal evaluation of the program. Award recipients must maintain all data collected, including survey responses and contact information, for a minimum of three years following completion of each participant's exchange visitor program.

14. Department of State Web Resources
Outreach Resources: During the cooperative agreement period, the Bureau may develop hosting resources to assist POs with hosting outreach, and to promote YES as a U.S. Department of State program. POs are expected to support promotional campaigns by providing information to ECA and updating promotional materials as needed.

Online Communities: All PO staff and volunteers associated with YES are expected to be knowledgeable of the Department of State's resources such as, but not limited to, www.exchanges.state.gov and www.alumni.state.gov, and to register as members or guest members of the websites, as applicable. Staff and coordinator training as well as orientations for students and host families are to include presentations and demonstrations on these resources.

Department of State resource sites must be promoted effectively to participants and participants are expected to become active members at these sites. While POs may provide their own resources and on-line opportunities, these additional online resources may not replace involvement with Department of State online communities.

III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

1. **Online Forms**
   SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"
   SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
   SF-424B, "Assurances – Non-construction Programs"
   Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

2. **Program Narrative**
   - **Executive Summary:** In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:
     a. Name of the organization submitting the proposal
     b. Beginning and ending dates of the program
     c. Proposed theme
     d. Nature of activity
     e. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources, and total per student cost
     f. Scope of the projects including:
        i. Number of students to be placed
        ii. Geographic distribution of students
        iii. Method of placement
        iv. Subaward recipient organizations
        v. Proposed theme
        vi. Nature of activities\
        vii. Funding level requested from the Bureau
        viii. Total program cost
        ix. Total cost sharing from applicant and other sources
        x. Total per-student cost

   - **Narrative:** In up to 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

a. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
b. Participating Organizations
c. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
d. Program Evaluation
e. Follow-on
f. Project Management
g. Work Plan/Time Frame

Additional Information to be Submitted:

3. **Detailed Budget**: Budgets include, but are not limited to, the following items:

Each budget should include the following costs:
- Student Stipend: $125 fixed rate per student monthly allowance for 11 months for social activities and personal items (e.g., movie and pizza with friends, toiletries, haircut)
- Incidentals Allowance Fund: $300 average per student fund, reimbursable to the host family for school start-up costs and other school-related expenses (e.g., yearbook, locker fees, gym shorts) for which receipts must be presented to the PO.
- Emergency Expense Fund: $100 average per student fund to be retained by the PO for small emergency expenses (e.g., eyeglasses or minor dental problems not covered by insurance)
- Enhancement Activities Fund: $400 average per student fund (All related activities including field visits, leadership training, cross-culture and inter-faith workshops, community service projects, etc. must be included in this amount. Additional funding requests will not be accepted.)
- Support and monitoring of regional and local staff; include support for home visits to a minimum of 20% of YES students
- Staff travel, i.e., expenses for at least one person per organization, including subaward recipients, to Washington, DC to attend a two-day ECA Youth Programs Division annual meeting

Budgets also may include the following items:
- National and regional local coordinator trainings in the United States
- Orientations (post-arrival, mid-program, and re-entry) for students and host families
- Stipends and honoraria for non-salaried staff and volunteers
- Identifying, screening (e.g., criminal background checks and interviewing), and selecting host families
- Monitoring students and host families, problem resolution, counseling, and resettling students, as necessary
- Program materials (include an explanation of how materials will be used)
- Administrative costs (e.g., salaries, communication, and supplies)
- English/academic tutoring provided in the most cost-effective way, when necessary
- Promotional materials, including social media and website development and maintenance (Proposals must offer examples and provide substantive justification for

promotional requests and how the funds will advance marketing needs specific to the YES program. General, ongoing promotion and marketing expenses of the organization may not be requested as a direct cost.)

- Mandatory school fees, including registration and books

The ECA requested budget should not include excess baggage fees or international travel, which may be cost-shared. The FY 2016 Overseas Components award recipient will provide funding for reasonable accommodation to support students with disabilities.

4. **Budget Narrative**: A budget narrative must be included and provide detailed explanation for each budget line item where the activity purpose or means of calculation may not be clear or require further justification. It should include at minimum: (1) Formulae used to calculate right column totals for multiple or replicated costs, unless clearly noted in the columned budget (e.g., travel and per diem costs for multiple people; training materials and expenses based on participant number, etc.); (2) Supportive explanation and justification for activities and expenses determined essential, but that may not be understood from the narrative or may otherwise be unclear to reviewers (e.g. security expenses, unique training or support needs due to country conditions, etc.); (3) Breakdown of costs associated with relatively high amount line item requests that would reasonably be questionable by reviewers. (e.g., if requesting $50K for "training materials," or $100K for "public relations," you must provide justification as well as an itemized breakdown for the totals to both explain the needs as well as potentially allow for a reduced negotiation if it is deemed that only partial funding is available).

5. **Calendar of Activities**: Anticipated cooperative agreement start and end dates are August 1, 2016, 2016 – September 30, 2020. Provide a monthly plan of action or timetable that demonstrates the timing and organization of your responsibilities as the recipient.

6. **Letters of Endorsement**

7. **Resumes and CVs** (resumes of all staff working directly with the program should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)

8. **Supplemental Materials:** You may include examples of assessment and evaluation tools, training and orientation agendas, application forms, resource materials and handbooks, etc.

9. **First Time Applicant Materials**, if applicable

Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

- Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

IV. REVIEW PROCESS

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. In addition, ECA will review the record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et seq. of applicant organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors by ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange.

All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as Public Diplomacy sections overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Program Objectives**: Your proposal narrative should exhibit originality, substance, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Reviewers will assess the degree to which proposals engage participants in community activities that involve skills development and leadership training. Strong preference will be given to organizations that choose to place participants in clusters of at least three students (these students should be from different countries, when possible) in a particular Local Coordinator's area of responsibility under review criterion "Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Program Objectives." A detailed agenda and work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described in the solicitation package. Reviewers will also assess the degree to which the proposed outcomes of the project are realistic and measurable. Strategies should creatively utilize resources at the local level to ensure an efficient use of program funds.

2. Support of Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. It is a goal of the Department to ensure that all funded programs reflect the diversity of American society. Describe your plans to promote this goal in the selection of host families and in the local enhancement programming. Where appropriate, comment on any role your organization plays in encouraging diversity in participant selection. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of host families, schools, program venue, and program evaluation) and program content (orientations, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

3. Organization's Record/Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Reviewers will assess the applicant and its partners to determine if they offer adequate resources, expertise, and experience to fulfill program objectives. Partner activities should be clearly defined. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting and J-1 Visa regulatory requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grant Staff. In addition, organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors must include a discussion of their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting, and other requirements. Proposals that fail to include the above information in their narrative will be deemed less or not competitive under this review criterion.

4. Multiplier Effect: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages. Reviewers will assess ways in which proposals include innovative ideas to expose U.S. communities to YES-related goals and activities that involve students, host families, and schools. These includes media outreach, visits to local and national government representatives, Internet-based applications, and other interactions. Reviewers will also evaluate substantive plans to prepare YES students for their role as active, effective YES alumni.

5. Participant Monitoring: Proposals must include a detailed monitoring plan, which addresses student, local coordinator, and host family monitoring. POs' practices and procedures for recruiting, screening, and selecting host families and placing YES participants with host families must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category (22 CFR 62.25). Proposals that demonstrate compliance with these regulations and detail your organization's oversight over local coordinators will be deemed more competitive under the Participant Monitoring Review Criterion. Plans that describe ways to attain 100% student participation will be deemed more competitive under the "Participant Monitoring" review criterion. Given the importance the Department places on this criterion, you should dedicate a significant percentage of the narrative to explaining how you will achieve the Department's goals in regard to monitoring the health, safety, and welfare of program participants. You may use the appendices to house additional details and supporting documentation.

6. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan to monitor and evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. Reviewers will assess your plans to monitor student progress and program activities, particularly in regard to intended outcomes indicated in your proposal. Award recipients will be expected to submit quarterly reports, which should be included as an inherent component of the work plan.

7. Cost-effectiveness: Reviewers will analyze the budget for clarity and cost-effectiveness. They will also assess the rationale of the proposed budget and whether the allocation of funds is appropriate to complete the tasks outlined in the project narrative. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Preference will be given to organizations whose proposals demonstrate a quality, cost-effective program.

V. APPLICATION SUBMISSION
The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, contact ECA Program Officer Kevin Baker by telephone at (202) 632-6073 or by email at BakerKM1@state.gov.